

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-10 PM-03 L-02 MC-02 NSC-07

NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 ACDA-10 SSO-00

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O R 151203Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8497

AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

USCINCEUR

SECDEF

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 4136

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINR MCAP MASS ET US SO UR

REF: ADDIS 4124

THERE FOLLOWS FULL ACCOUNT OF SUBJECT CONVERSATION SUMMARIZED
IN REFTEL.

1. PRIMIN OPENED WITH STATEMENT THAT CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS
IN ETHIOPIA HAVE AGGRAVATED ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI RELATIONS.
ETHIOPIA'S INTERNAL PROBLEMS ARE CONTRIBUTING TO
DESTABILIZATION THESE RELATIONS IN THAT THEY ENCOURAGE THOSE
ELEMENTS OF GSDR WHICH URGE SOMALI MILITARY ACTION AGAINST
ETHIOPIA. THESE ELEMENTS ARGUE THAT ETHIOPIA IS
PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE AT THIS TIME BUT THAT TI MAY BECOME
STRONGER THAN BEFORE AS A RESULT OF THE PPLITICAL
TRANSFORMATION NOW GOING ON. IEG HAD LONG BEEN OF VIEW
THAT ETHIOPIA'S UNITY AND INTEGRITY ARE ALSO A "VITAL US

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INTEREST." HIS GOVERNMENT SHARES THIS OPINION. THE

TREAT TO THIS MUTUAL INTEREST IS GROWING AND THE PROBLEM IS GRAVE. ACCORDINGLY, HE HAD ASKED KIFLE WODAJO TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON APRIL 15 OR 16 AND TO REMAIN THERE TO DISCUSS PROBLEM WITH USG.

2. AS USG WELL AWARE, ETHIOPIA/ SOMALI BALANCE OF POWER HAS BEEN FAVORABLE TO SOMALIA FOR SOME TIME. SOMALIA'S BUILDUP IS CONTINUING AND, AS THINGS STAND NOW, ETHIOPIA IS MARKEDLY INFERIOR TO SOMALIA IN ALL RESPECTS EXCEPT SIZE ITS FORCES. THESE FORCES, ON OTHER HAND, MUST BE DEPLOYED ELSEWHERE IN EMPIRE AS WELL AS OGADEN, WITH RESULT THAT MILITARY RESOURCES WHICH SOMALIA IS ABLE BRING BEAR ON OGADEN ARE SUPERIOR TO ETHIOPIA'S. IEG IS MAKING URGENT APPEAL FOR IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY MILITARY ASSISTANCE; MODALITIES TO BE DISCUSSED. ETHIOPIA NEEDS THIS, ON EITHER GRANT OR CREDIT BASIS, NOT FOR OFFENSE BUT FOR DEFENSE AND DETERRENCE.

3. FONMIN THEN ELABORATED ON FOREGOING. IEG UNDERSTOOD CONGRESSIONAL PROBLEM WITH WHICH US EXECUTIVE BRANCH MUST DEAL. DR. MENASSIE FELT, HOWEVER, THAT CONGRESS WOULD REACT POSITIVELY TO EXPLANATION OF ETHIOPIA'S PROBLEMS ONCE IT IS CLEAR THAT EMPIRE IS STANDING AGAINST SOVIET HEGEMONY IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.

4. ETHIOPIA, IN ITS WEAKNESS, CANNOT AFFORD TO PUBLICIZE DEGREE OF CURRENT SOVIET INTERVENTION IN ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS. SOVIET POLITICAL PRESSURE UPON IEG HAS ALSO BEEN RISING. "THEY ARE TELLING US WE MUST PAY A PRICE FOR THEIR MODERATION IN ARMS DELIVERIES TO SOMALIA," DR. MENASSIE SAID. SOVIETS KEEP ASKING FOR CONSULATES IN ETHIOPIA'S PROVINCIAL CENTERS AND CONTENT THAT IEG'S RESISTANCE IS ONE MORE INDICATION OF ITS CONTINUING ALIGNMENT WITH US AND COOLNESS TOWARDS USSR.

5. FONMIN THEN SAID THAT IEG UNDERSTANDS USG DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING ADDITIONAL GRANT MAP RESOURCES IN ABSENCE FULL UNDERSTANDING OF ISSUE AND CIRCUMSTANCES ON CAPITOL HILL. IT THEREFORE IS DESIRABLE FOR USG PROVIDE (FMS) CREDITS ON SOFTEST TERMS TO PROMOTE TWO COUNTRIES' COMMON
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INTERESTS. MATTER IS URGENT. IEG MUST HAVE MILITARY MEANS TO SUSTAIN A CREDIBLE DEFENSIVE POSTURE AND IT DETER ANY SOMALI MILITARY ADVENTURE.

6. ETHIOPIA'S WEAKNESS INCREASINGLY EVIDENT AND INVITES ATTACK. CONSEQUENCES OF ANY SOMALI AGGRESSION UPON ETHIOPIA WOULD BE VERY SERIOUS. IF ATTACK SUCCESSFUL IN INITIAL STAGES AND ETHIOPIA SUSTAINED SIGNIFICANT LOSSES,

INTERNAL IMPACT WOULD BE VERY GREAT. ALREADY ACTIVE EXTREMIST ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL FORCES WOULD BOIL TO SURFACE AND OVERTHROW ENDELKACHEW CABINET. ETHIOPIA'S MODERATE POLITICAL LEADERS AND POLICIES, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC, WOULD HAVE BEEN DISCREDITED. STRONG ANTI-AMERICAN REACTION WOULD UNQUESTIONABLY FOLLOW SINCE PEOPLE WOULD CONSIDER US LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ETHIOPIA'S WEAKNESS. NEW RADICAL GOVERNMENT WOULD PRBABLY PURSUE PRO-SOVIET POLICY. THE PRESENT DANGER IS REAL. SOMALI PROBES ON BORDERS ARE BEING STEPPED UP. SOMALI AIRCRAFT HAVE INTRUDED AS FAR AS JIJIGA AND OVERFLOWN ETHIOPIA'S POSITIONS AND FORCES IN FIELD. ETHIOPIA'S MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT DEEPLY CONSCIOUS OF AND CONCERNED WITH WEAKNESS EMPIRE'S MILITARY POSTURE. "THIS (APPEAL FOR HELP) IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGE WHICH ETHIOPIA HAS SENT THE US IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS."

7. MIN IN PRIMIN'S OFFICE KIFLE WODAJO THEN SAID HE HAD UNDERTAKEN HIGH LEVEL REVIEW OF ETHIOPIA'S MILITARY POSTURE ON INSTRUCTIONS PRIMIN. CONCLUSION CLEAR THAT ETHIOPIA AT PRESENT COULD NOT PREVENT OR THROW BACK SOMALI ATTACK. ETHIOPIA NOW HAS NEITHER CREDITABLE OFFENSIVE CAPABILITY NOR EFFECTIVE DEFENSE. SOMALI DEFENSES ON OTHER HAND GROWING MORE EFFECTIVE. FOR EXAMPLE, SOMALIA NOW INSTALLING SOPHISTICATED ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES. TWO SAMS ARE IN AND FIVE MORE ARE BEING READIED. RESULT IS EROSION ETHIOPIA'S DETERRENT CAPACITY. SOMALIA IS SUPERIOR IN EVERY CATEGORY OF ARMS AND ITS FORCES ARE HIGHLY MOBILE. "ETHIOPIA IS A SITTING DUCK."

8. IEG IS LOOKING AT "PHASE I PACKAGE" WHICH WAS WORKED OUT IN USG/IEG PRIORITIES COMMITTEE LAST SUMMER AND WAS COSTED AT US\$80-100 MILLION. CONTENTS THIS PACKAGE

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ARE INADEQUATE BUT IT IS COMPROMISE SOLUTION.

9. PRIMIN THEN SUMMARIZED. ETHIOPIA'S PROBLEM HAS BECOME "MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH." IEG NEEDS EMERGENCY MILITARY AID AND USUAL LENGTHY BUREAUCRATIC PROCESSES MUST BE SHORT-CIRCUITED. ETHIOPIA MUST BE ABLE DEFEND ITSELF AND ITS CAPACITY TO DO SO IS ALSO A VITAL AMERICAN INTEREST. BESIDES MATERIEL, HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD WELCOME US INITIATIVE VIS-A-VIS USSR IN DETENTE CONTEXT TO SUPPORT ETHIOPIA. "USSR SHOULD BE TOLD THAT US FINDS SOVIET POLICY OF FOSTERING ETHIOPIA'S DISMEMBERMENT INTOLERABLE." PRIMIN HOPED KIFLE WOULD BE ABLE TO DISCUSS PROBLEM AT APPROPRIATE HIGH LEVEL TO PREPARE FONMIN'S VISIT. FONMIN SHOULD GO TO US AS SOON AS HE CAN BE RECEIVED, AND IT MIGHT WELL BE DESIRABLE

FOR CERTAIN EXPERTS TO GO TO WASHINGTON BETWEEN VISITS OF KIFLE AND FONMIN. PRIMIN TRUSTED THAT VIEWS HE HAD EXPRESSED WOULD BE BROUGHT TO PERSONAL ATTENTION OF SECSTATE.

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USCINCEUR

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S E C R E T FINAL SECTION OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 4136

LIMDIS

SUBJ: PRIMIN'S REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY MILITARY ASSISTANCE

10. I FIRST RESPONDED WITH EXPRESSION USG'S UNDERSTANDING OF IEG'S INTEREST IN PRESERVATION ITS DETERRENT CAPABILITIES. WE KNOW THAT IEG IS ONLY INTERESTED IN DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE. I ALSO EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF IEG'S GROWING CONCERN IN VIEW OF ADDITIONAL FACTORS CITED, VIZ, ETHIOPIA'S DOMESTIC SITUATION, SOMALI PROBES, AND SOVIET PRESSURES.

11. I THEN ADVERTED BRIEFLY TO VIEWS WHICH HAD BEEN EXPRESSED TO ME TWO DAYS EARLIER BY AMBASSADOR KIRK, ON BRIEF VISIT HERE FROM MOGADISCIO. HE DID NOT BELIEVE SOMALIA THINKING OF ATTACKING ETHIOPIA AT PRESENT TIME.

SOMALIA WAS STILL BEING DETERRED BY FEAR THAT ANY
INITIAL SUCCESS WAS UNLIKELY TO BE SUSTAINED OVER TIME
AS ETHIOPIA GATHERED ITS POTENTIAL AND BROUGHT IT TO
BEAR IN RESPONSE. AMBASSADOR HAD SAID, HOWEVER,
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THAT A DRASTIC FURTHER DETERIORATION IN ETHIOPIA'S INTERNAL
SITUATION, WHICH GAVE GSDR THE IMPRESSION THAT EMPIRE HAD
LOST ITS CAPACITY TO REACT, COULD ENCOURAGE SOMALIS TO TRY
SEIZE ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY BY FORCE OF ARMS. IT WAS
AMBASSADOR KIRK'S VIEW THAT SOMALI ARMY SUFFERS FROM
VERY SERIOUS DEFICIENCIES IN MAINTENANCE AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT.

12. I SAID WASHINGTON HAD INDICATED (AS I HAD INFORMED
FONMIN ON APRIL 8 THAT DR. MENASSIE WOULD BE WELCOME IN
US IN MID-MAY AT EARLIEST. I HAD BEEN WARNED, HOWEVER,
NOT TO CONVEY IMPRESSION THAT HIGHER LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE
THAN CURRENTLY PROGRAMMED IS LIKELY TO EVENTUATE AS RESULT
HIS VISIT. AS WE HAD OFTEN POINTED OUT TO IEG ON PREVIOUS
OCCASIONS, IT HAD BEEN EXTRAORDINARILY DIFFICULT
TO ACHIEVE THE LEVEL FOR ETHIOPIA NOW PLANNED FOR FY 74.
ADMINISTRATION IS STRUGGLING MEET MAP REQUIREMENTS IN
CAMBODIA AND ELSEWHERE WITH DECREASING RESOURCES, AND
THESE PROBLEMS ARE ACUTE. MOREOVER MAAG CHIEF HAD JUST
LEARNED DURING SHORT WASHINGTON VISIT THAT SUPPLY
OUTLOOK FOR EARLY DELIVERY OF CERTAIN MILITARY
EQUIPMENT SUCH AS M-60 TANK IS GRIM. STILL, IT WOULD BE GOOD HAVE
DR. MENASSIE EXPLAIN ETHIOPIA'S CURRENT SITUATION AND PRIMIN'S
VIEWS IN PERSON.

13. FONMIN BROKE IN TO SAY THAT ETHIOPIAN INTELLIGENCE
SUPPORTED AMBASSADOR KIRK'S ASSESSMENT I HAD JUST
DESCRIBED. PRIMIN SAID THERE SEEMS TO BE DEBATE WITHIN
SOMALI REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, WITH YOUNGER ELEMENTS PRESSING
FOR SOMALI MILITARY MOVE IN LIGHT ETHIOPIA'S DOMESTIC
PROBLEMS WHILE OLDER SRC ELEMENTS TAKING POSITION THAT IF
EMPIRE INDEED DISINTEGRATING GSDR NEED NOT ATTACK. HE
THEN MADE POINT THAT UNFORTUNATELY, WITH COUNTRY LIKE
SOMALIA, ONE NEVER KNEW HOW LONG MODERATES WOULD BE ABLE
TO HOLD LINE. FONMIN THEN REPEATED THAT IEG MORE THAN
EVER CONCERNED WITH DOMESTIC CONSEQUENCES OF ANY SOMALI
ATTACK LEADING TO LIKELY INITIAL SOMALI MILITARY SUCCESS.
"WE THINK THE SOMALIS AND THE USSR FEEL THEY CAN GAIN
THEIR OBJECTIVES MORE EASILY IN THIS REGION IF A MORE
RADICAL IEG COMES TO THE HELM IN ADDIS."

14. PRIMIN SAID HE FELT IT IS IN US INTEREST THAT HIS
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GOVERNMENT BE ABLE TO SUCCEED IN ITS TASK OF CONDUCTING ETHIOPIA THROUGH A PEACEFUL TRANSITION. HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO COPE WITH THE INTENSIVE DOMESTIC PRESSURES NOW BEING EXERTED ON IT BUT AN INITIALLY SUCCESSFUL SOMALI STRIKE WOULD INCREASE THE STRAIN UNBEARABLY AND BRING A RADICAL GOVERNMENT TO POWER.

15. FONMIN THEN SAID THAT ALL THE WORLD KNOWS ON WHOM SOMALI AND ETHIOPIA RESPECTIVELY DEPEND. ETHIOPIA'S FAILURE WOULD BE SEEN AS A FAILURE OF AMERICAN SUPPORT WHICH WOULD AFFECT AMERICAN TIES TO OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES, BEGINNING WITH KENYA AND THE SUDAN. FONMIN KHALID MANSOUR HAD BEEN VERY EXPLICIT ON THIS POINT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT. HE HAD EXPRESSED HIS GOVERNMENT'S DEEP CONCERN OVER THE IMPLICATIONS FOR SUDAN OF US-BACKED ETHIOPIA'S WEAKNESS VIS-A-VIS SOVIET-BACKED SOMALIA. A FAILURE IN US SUPPORT WOULD ENHANCE THE PERCEPTION BY THIRD COUNTRIES OF THE US AS AN UNRELIABLE FRIEND AND WOULD PUSH OTHER GOVERNMENTS INTO GREATER ACCOMMODATION WITH THE USSR.

16. I SAID I WELL UNDERSTOOD THE POINTS PRIMIN AND FONMIN HAD MADE, WOULD CONVEY THEM PROMPTLY TO WASHINGTON, AND WISHED SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS MY GOVERNMENT'S AND MY OWN BEST WISHES FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE PRIMIN'S ENDEAVOR TO DEAL WITH THE GREAT PRESSURES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR INSTANT PAY INCREASES AND REFORMS WHICH CHARACTERIZE THE CURRENT ETHIOPIAN SCENE.

17. PRIMIN AND FONMIN THEN ONCE MORE URGED USG ACT EXPEDITIOUSLY. IEG THINKING IN TERMS OF \$80-100 MILLION FOR INITIAL EMERGENCY CREDIT. IEG SEEKS SOFTEST TERMS BUT IS PREPARED COMMIT ITSELF ACCEPT BEST TERMS USG CAN OFFER. IDEALLY, IT WOULD HOPE INITIAL SHIPMENTS OF MATERIEL MIGHT GO FORWARD IMMEDIATELY WHILE TERMS OF CREDIT BEING HAMMERED OUT ON UNDERSTANDING THAT IEG PREPARED COMMIT ITSELF IN ADVANCE TO ACCEPT BEST DEAL USG COULD OFFER.

18. I THEN RAISED TENNECO FIVE, STONEHOUSE ATTACK, AND PORT CONGESTION PROBLEMS AS DESCRIBED IN SEPTELS.

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19. EMBASSY'S COMMENTS ON SUBSTANCE PRIMIN/FONMIN'S PRESENTATION TO FOLLOW SOON. WYMAN

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